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I STAND SUNDAY

Web rally for Houston pastors set for Nov. 2

SBC president to speak during free simulcast from Houston church

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd will be a featured speaker Nov. 2 for the I Stand Sunday simulcast being held in response to five Houston, Texas, ministers being issued subpoenas by the city's attorney to turn over their sermons, speeches, and other pastoral communications that deal with homosexuality.

The free, live simulcast begins at 6 p.m. from Grace Community Church in Houston, and will focus



FLOYD

on "the freedom to live out our faith free of government intrusion or monitoring," according to the website, istandsunday.com. Among others scheduled to speak at the event are:

■ Mike Huckabee, former Arkansas governor and current Fox News commentator/show host.

■ Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., and host of the simulcast. Perkins is no relation to William Perkins, editor of The Baptist Record.

■ Phil Robertson, star of the top-rated A&E cable channel reality show, Duck Dynasty, and his son Alan, a Church of Christ pastor.

■ Todd Starnes, Fox News reporter/commentator and former associate editor at Baptist Press in Nashville.

■ Ed Young, senior pastor at Second Church, Houston, Texas, who has been targeted for years by militant homosexual groups for his traditional Christian views on homosexuality.

see HOUSTON on p. 9

Ex-missionary pleads guilty to federal charges

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Former Southern Baptist missionary Brady Nurse pleaded guilty Oct.

21 in a federal court to fraudulently obtaining more than \$285,000 in mission funds over a period of five years while working as a logistics and business coordinator for the International Mission Board (IMB) in Portugal.

Nurse, 37, who resigned as a missionary in January, could face up to 20 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000, and an order to make full restitution of the money he took. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 21 by U.S. District Judge James R. Spencer in Richmond, Va.

Nurse, a Montana native now living in Washington State according to court records, and his wife Andrea were appointed IMB missionaries in March 2006. His wire fraud activity was discovered earlier this year by the mission board's internal auditing procedures. The FBI began a months-long investigation that resulted in the federal charges.

Nurse admitted in a statement filed with his plea agreement that he obtained the money through 135 fraudulent reimbursement requests from 2008-2013, both during his time in Portugal and after returning to the U.S. In the statement, Nurse acknowledged that he:

■ routinely altered amounts on valid documents and invoices submitted on expense reports to increase his reimbursement;

■ submitted fraudulent, manufactured, and/or duplicated documentation on expense reports;

■ falsely represented quotes and estimates for service from vendors, rather than lower amounts actually charged;

■ altered documentation

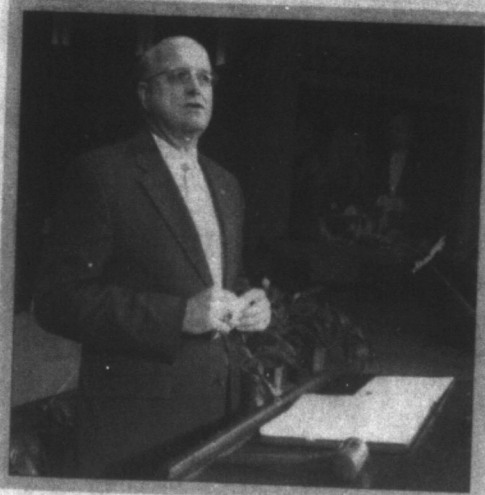
associated with household shipping charges to obtain additional benefit from an increase shipping allowance;

■ falsely obtained reimbursement for non-reimbursable expenses; and

■ continued to seek reimbursement for suspect shipping expenses after his return to the U.S., by false statements submitted to IMB through interstate e-mails.

He also received nearly \$21,000 in additional funds through a clerical error by the board's benefits department, and has yet to return those funds.

Derek Gaubatz, IMB general counsel, said in a statement, "We are deeply grieved that one sent out to proclaim the free gift of the Gospel would violate the sacred trust placed in him by Southern Baptists. IMB believes it is appropriate that Mr. Nurse face accountability for his actions and fully supports his prosecution under federal law. At the same time, IMB takes no joy in that prosecution. IMB is praying for Mr. Nurse and his family that they would experience the mercy of God in a fresh way."



MBC ANNUAL MEETING CONVENES

IN SESSION — Matt Buckles, Mississippi Baptist Convention president and senior pastor of First Church, Vicksburg, calls to order the 2014 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention on the morning of Oct. 28 in the Sanctuary of First Church, Jackson. Full coverage of the annual meeting will be published in the Nov. 6 issue of The Baptist Record. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

The Houston Five

Government officials are demanding access to Christian pastors' sermons, speeches, and personal notes — not in China, not in Russia, not in the Islamic State. Pastors are under the gun in Houston, Texas, where city officials in their obsession to force so-called homosexual rights on the citizens have issued wide-ranging subpoenas for pastors' materials.

You read correctly. Houston officials are seeking sermons, speeches, personal notes, and other documentation from five Houston-area pastors who have publicly expressed opposition to HERO, the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance. The intent of the Houston government is unmistakable. They desperately want Christian leaders out of the picture so their twisted agenda will sail smoothly to enactment.

A short history lesson is in order. The Houston City Council, under intense pressure from openly lesbian Mayor Annise Parker and LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) advocates, passed HERO on May 28. The Houston Chronicle newspaper reported that the ordinance applies to businesses that serve the public, private employers, housing, city employment, and city contracting. Violators could be fined up to \$5,000.

There are provisions in the ordinance that would allow persons who believe they are of the opposite gender than they actually are to use restrooms of the gender they choose. There are obvious concerns about children being subjected to such people while trying to use a restroom.

The ordinance does provide an exemption for religious institutions, the Chronicle reported.

Anti-HERO groups swiftly began a petition drive calling for a public vote to repeal the ordinance. The petition drive, which was supported by many churches and other Christian organizations, was successful in gaining almost twice the number of signatures needed to force a vote.

Enter Houston City Attorney Dave Feldman, appointed to his job by the mayor in 2010, who swiftly dismissed enough signatories to cause the petition to fail. Thus, the issue cannot be brought up again for two years.

Supporters of the petition drive filed a lawsuit contesting Feldman's count. In response and with the mayor's blessing, Feldman filed the subpoenas under the discovery phase of the lawsuit demanding of the five pastors "all speeches, presentations,

or sermons related to HERO, the Petition, Mayor Annise Parker, homosexuality, or gender identity prepared by, delivered by, revised by, or approved by you or in your possession.

All five pastors have thus far refused to comply with the subpoenas. Parker has used Twitter to make her case for the subpoenas, tweeting on Oct. 15, "If the 5 pastors used pulpits for politics, their sermons are fair game. Were instructions given on filling out anti-HERO petition?"

The level of ignorance of the U.S. Constitution and Internal Revenue Service regulations contained in that tweet are simply stupefying, but challenging the mayor on those grounds will have to wait for another day and another column.

Eric Metaxas, a Christian author noted for his biographies of William Wilberforce and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, is alarmed about the implications of the mayor's subpoenas.

Writing on breakpoint.org, Metaxas points out, "So if we don't act on this, we can't complain when we lose further liberties and eventually we aren't able to act at all. This is our chance. Whatever voice and liberties we have now, we must use."

"So what am I suggesting we do? Well, my friends at the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission had a great idea. They urged pastors all across America to send their sermons to the Houston Mayor's office. In fact, why don't we all send sermons? But then I had another idea: we should send Bibles as well."

"Why Bibles? Because we need to say that this is the Word of God and in America it is not subject to governmental oversight or regulation. Those who value this book answer to a higher authority than the State."

What say you, Mississippi Baptist pastors? Are you willing to take a stand by mailing your sermons to Mayor Parker? Her address is City Hall, 501 Bagby Street, Houston, TX 77002. In addition, Mississippi Baptists of all stripes can support the Houston Five pastors by sending their own letters to the mayor.

Be direct but respectful, polite but forceful, and above all be Christian.

I may not have many sermons to my credit, but be assured of this: As soon as the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention is over this week, there will be a box load of editorials from The Baptist Record winging its way to Houston, Texas.

It's that important.

Freedom of religion: Is it worth the fight?

Freedom of religion is assured by the First Amendment to our U.S. Constitution. Many of the colonists, particularly Baptists, threatened to oppose the adoption of the Constitution if it was not included. James Madison, the principal craftsman of the Constitution, and many others contended that delegates from various religious groups would contend for the special slant of their particular church — which would prevent the adoption of the Constitution.

John Leland, a Baptist pastor and leader among the Baptists of Virginia, was prepared to be a candidate for the Constitutional Convention to oppose adoption if a provision for religious freedom was not included. Leland moved to Virginia at the age of 21 to fight for freedom of religion. He knew Virginia was a key state in the process of adopting a constitution.

Leland would be running against James Madison. James Madison Sr. heard of this and sent a message to his son, James Jr., telling him that he must spend some time with Leland as he traveled from Fredericksburg to his home in Orange County. The elder Madison knew, as did his son, that the latter could not win the election to represent Orange County in the Constitutional Convention without the support of the Baptists.

The laws and administration thereof were very suppressive of Baptists in Virginia at the time. Madison had represented them, as had Patrick Henry. After much debate under an oak tree on Leland's farm, they struck an agreement that if Leland would not run but support Madison, then as soon as the Constitution was adopted Madison would introduce a Bill of Rights as an amendment to the Constitution and work for its adoption. Madison did, and it was adopted.

Madison and Henry were leading opponents in the debate on the Constitution. Henry opposed it because it did not include a provision for freedom of religion. Madison won on the issue to do it by amendment, by a vote of 88-80.

Freedom of religion was the primary motivation for people coming to America in colonial days. It was also the primary



Guest opinion
with Charles Carter

goal for the Declaration of Independence. They fought under extreme hardship for independence, to assure to their descendants freedom of religion which they did not have before.

It has been written that British soldiers at Yorktown scoffed at the "shoeless victors" as the British passed by in surrender. The Revolutionary War was fought by those who felt it was worth fighting for, and even dying for, to gain freedom of religion. In his book, *His Excellency George Washington*, Joseph J. Ellis wrote:

The most graphic piece of visual evidence about the legendary winter at Valley Forge happens to be true. No less a source than Washington himself describes the shoeless soldiers tracking blood on the snow. "To see Men without Cloathes to cover their nakedness, without Blankets to lay on, without Shoes, by which their Marches might be traced by the Blood from their feet," he recalled, "is a mark of Patience and obedience which in my opinion can scarce be paralleled." Most of the horses died from starvation or exposure, and their decaying carcasses filled the air with a stench that joined with the blood in the snow to create sensory scenes that Washington never forgot.

Today, religious expression is under attack. Our soldiers, military chaplains, school teachers, and others are denied their right of free religious expression. Pastors may be reluctant to preach on certain portions of Scripture. Many lower court decisions have been adverse. In most of such cases, there was no appeal due to lack of funding.

see CARTER on p. 9

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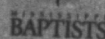
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China: Fewer abortions, but more persecutions

WASHINGTON (BP) — China's newly announced switch to a two-child population control policy does not resolve the coercive nature of the program, pro-life leaders say, and disclosure of the change came even as the communist government imposes the most severe Christian oppression in four decades, according to a leading advocate for the Chinese church.

Christians face the "worst persecution in China since the Cultural Revolution," Bob Fu, president of ChinaAid, said in an article by Christian Today on Oct. 9.

That description is justified, Fu explained to Baptist Press (BP) in written comments in an email interview Oct. 22, due to "both the large scale and the severe degree of [the] violent crackdown" against not only the unregistered house churches but against the government-approved Three-Self Patriotic Movement congregations.

Christianity opposed

About 300 churches have either been destroyed or had crosses forcibly removed recently in the ongoing campaign, and various believers have been arrested, Fu said.

Three-Self pastor Zhang Shaojie of Henan Province received a 12-year prison sentence in July, Fu noted, while Huang Yizi, a Three-Self pastor in Zhejiang Province, awaits trial after rallying prayer support for victims of the government crackdown.

Fu told BP credible evidence exists that demonstrates Xi Jinping, who became China's president in March 2013, instituted a "more hostile religious policy" last year. His goal is to "contain the over-heated growth of Christianity, according to confirmed and verified officially issued documents," Fu said.

Christianity is listed as a national security threat by the Chinese Communist Party, said Fu, who received the 2007 John Leland Religious Liberty Award from Southern Baptists' Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) for his work on behalf of the persecuted church in China.

One-child policy

Meanwhile, a government researcher's statement that China intends to "fully relax" its infamous one-child population control policy in two years was reported by

Bloomberg News on Oct. 16.

Cai Fang, a vice director of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said, "People wish to choose the number of children they want to have, and they should be given the choice, at least for two children."

Russell D. Moore, president of the ERLC in Nashville, said a two-child policy "is not good enough to answer China's horrific human rights record when it comes to innocent unborn children."

"We should be glad that some children will be born who would have otherwise been killed, but the fundamental problem of China's forced population control remains," Moore said in a written statement to Baptist Press.

"This government's Pharaoh-like brutality is seen in its audacity in acting as though it has the authority to 'allow' or 'disallow' life. We should pray for the day when human rights and human dignity are recognized in China, in which children are seen as blessings and gifts, and not as herds to be culled."

To say China "will fully relax" its policy is "extremely misleading," Reggie Littlejohn said in response to the Bloomberg report. Littlejohn is president of Women's Rights Without Frontiers, which campaigns against China's coercive program.

"Allowing all couples to have a second child does not constitute a 'full relaxation' of the One-Child Policy," Littlejohn said in a written statement. "The problem with the One Child Policy is not the number of children 'allowed.' Rather, it is the fact [that China] is telling women how many children they can have and then enforcing that limit through forced abortion, forced sterilization, and infanticide."

The one-child program generally restricts couples to a single child, but exceptions increasingly have been permitted in recent years. The limit in urban areas is one child, but two children are allowed to families in rural areas if the first is a girl. Parents in cities may have second babies if at least one is an only child.

Couples who violate the policy face the possibility not only of large fines, job loss, and imprisonment but also forced abortions and sterilizations.

'Appalling' enforcement

"Even if all couples were allowed two



children, there is no guarantee [China] will cease their appalling methods of enforcement," Littlejohn said. "Women will still need a birth permit to have their first and second child. Women who get pregnant without permission will still be dragged out of their homes, strapped down to tables, and forced to abort babies that they want, even up to the ninth month of pregnancy."

Calling China's population control program the "One Child Policy" is "a misnomer that causes confusion," Littlejohn said. "It should be called China's 'Forced Abortion Policy.' China's Forced Abortion Policy does not need to be modified. It needs to be abolished," she said.

China first instituted limits on population growth in 1971 and established what became known as its "one-child policy" in the late 1970s. Last year, the government reported the following statistics since 1971: 336 million abortions performed, 196 million sterilizations conducted, and 403 million intrauterine devices inserted.

While Beijing says the program has prevented 400 million live births and raised many families from poverty, the restriction has produced widespread reports of forced, even late-term, abortions and sterilizations by authorities in some localities.

The coercive abortions are performed normally on female babies, because of the Chinese preference for sons. Sex-selection

abortions and infanticide have resulted in dramatic differences in the female and male birth rates.

China is beginning to reap the harvest of its population control program. China's fertility rate of 1.66 per woman is far short of the 2.1 level needed to sustain population levels, according to the United Nations, Bloomberg reported. China's labor population, which consists of people between 16 and 59 years old, dropped in both 2012 and 2013, according to the report.

Churches speak up

A comparatively small but growing number of China's churches have begun to address abortion in recent years. Pastors are preaching on the sanctity of human life, resulting in repentance among church members, and congregations are seeking to aid women who are under pressure to abort, according to a July 15 report in BP.

Fu of ChinaAid attributed the change in the Chinese church "to both the persistent awareness campaign by the international pro-life and liberty organizations and the increasing teachings about life, dignity and liberty issues by some Chinese churches."

The switch "from indifference to more repentance" and a pro-life position by house churches in China has occurred perhaps only in the last few years, Fu told BP.

N. Korea releases accused American after Bible flap

"It is tragic that the regime fears spiritual truth, but that is the nature of fallen flesh. The Gospel is indeed the power of God for salvation."

Barrett Duke

vice president for public policy and research at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission

MIAMISBURG, Ohio (BP) — An American citizen who was detained in North Korea for nearly six months for allegedly leaving a Bible in a night club has been reunited with his family in Ohio.

Jeffrey Fowle, 56, was awaiting trial on charges of committing an anti-state crime before North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un ordered his release, the New York Times reported. Fowle met his wife and three children at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, on Oct. 22 after flying from Pyongyang on a U.S. military plane.

"I don't know whether or not Mr. Fowle left a Bible behind or not, but if the regime accused him of doing so, it must consider the Bible to be a significant threat," Barrett Duke, vice president for public policy and research at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, told Baptist Press in an email.

"It is tragic that the regime fears spiritual truth, but that is the nature of fallen flesh. The Gospel is indeed the power of God for salvation. It is my prayer that one day soon all the people of North Korea will be free to read God's Word and that Kim Jong Un, as

well, will read it and be wonderfully saved through Jesus."

A State Department spokeswoman said Fowle "appears to be in good health" but added that the U.S. cannot discuss details of his release while it is still working for the release of two other Americans in North Korean custody — Kenneth Bae and Matthew Miller.

Bae is a Christian who was arrested as he led a tour group in 2012 and sentenced to 15 years of hard labor on charges of "trying to build an underground proselytizing network in a plot to overthrow the government in Pyongyang," the Times reported.

Miller was convicted in September of spying and sentenced to six years of hard labor after he ripped up his tourist visa. North Korea claims Miller engaged in unruly behavior in hope of being sent to a prison camp, where he could observe alleged human rights violations, according to the Times.

Bethel Church in West Carrollton, Oh., where Fowle has attended, tweeted on Oct. 21, "We rejoice in the news that Jeff Fowle has been released and will soon be reunited with his family." Bethel is not a Southern Baptist church.

I travel up and down the beautiful Natchez Trace Parkway often. I may be going to the northeast part of our state or the southwest and drive along that ancient road that Native Americans and frontiers people use to walk or ride on horseback. Now the speed limit remains 50 miles per hour which is extremely fast when you think about those early settlers and how fast they were traveling. Just above where the Natchez Trace crosses over Highway 82 there is a sign for a long stretch of the road that tells you what you're about to see is tornado damage. It was part of the outbreak of tornadoes in April 2011 that crossed over woods and fields, towns and cities in our state. It was the same outbreak that went through Smithville, Mississippi, and devastated that town and killed so many people.

While tornadoes do not pay attention to state lines, some of those tornadoes crossed on over out of Mississippi into Alabama, and one was the devastating storm that went through Tuscaloosa and killed many more. Scores of times, maybe hundreds since the tornadoes, I have been through that section on the Trace that is marked "Tornado Damage." For there are hundreds of trees that were twisted and broken, many were uprooted and many were just stripped of limbs and leaves. But time has passed, seasons have come and gone, new growth has come out on old trees and new trees have sprung up and the landscape that was bare and broken has changed dramatically.

I suppose in about one more growing cycle the folks at the Natchez Trace Parkway probably will take down those signs because, for someone who did not know, it would be hard to even tell that something unusual had taken place there several years ago. It is God's plan for restoration of the land that has been altered by high winds and falling trees and in time new generations will pass over the same asphalt and not even know there was a frightening, cataclysmic storm ex-



Tornado Damage

perience that had happened right where they are. Some say that time is a great healer, and I guess there is a sense that that is true, but in reality, it's not just the passing of days or years that heals, but all of the things that God has put in place and the support mechanisms of life that can make a difference as time moves on.

There are several things that I could name, but one is to point out that growth changes the landscape of life. I've noticed through the months and years that every time I come through that area of devastation in the woods created by that tornado, that while there are some scars, there are also improvements and the growth of trees. The growth of weeds and vegetation out there on the hillside has slowly but surely improved the looks and healed scars. As small children all of us may have come face-to-face with fears that may keep us awake or shake us. Some of the fears are overcome by our physical growth, and we realize that a small little green lizard is not going to attack us and drag us off into the woods. We may not like them when we get grown, but from childhood to manhood the growth process in between alleviates a lot of the horror in our lives. I listen to the Lord as He says,

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God" (Isa. 41:10). And day by day in the process of growing and the progress that we make along the way, the strength of God overcomes our fears. So it's more than time that heals, but growth in life heals some of the scars of storms that have touched all of us.

But I have watched as I have passed through that area of storm destruction that as time moves on, others help in the healing. Now in the landscape of life, others includes wildlife and small animals, birds and all kinds of fowl. For a while I never saw any birds around there. Their habitat had been seriously wounded. No doubt some of their nests were destroyed. No doubt some of them lost their baby bird family in the storm, but now, I have spotted the return of the wildlife. Now, how does that help? Well, who knows how many seeds the birds bring in and out and scatter them in the process? How many rabbits or rats, fox and deer come through there knocking off seeds or getting them hung in their fur, depositing them somewhere out on an empty spot?

It's interesting to see how all this agricultural stuff takes place, all under

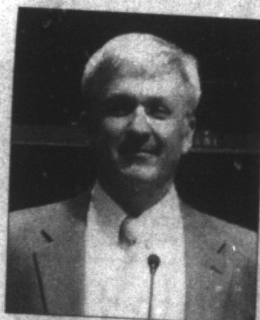
the watchful care of God. But the fact is I've never seen anybody out there sowing seed, scattering new potential plants, but it is happening and it does happen in the damaged parts of our lives, too. Maybe someone in your church has just caringly brought a word of encouragement to you, spoken a right thing to your heart. Maybe a Sunday school teacher, maybe a word in the sermon, came to you and it was as if God said, "I'm glad you came to church today because I've got this especially for your heart." I can tell you there are people all around us at church, maybe at work, maybe an old friend, maybe somebody you don't even know. God uses them to help you in ways that they do not even know, but He knows and they bring just the right thing to help heal one of the scars in the landscape of your life.

Do you not find it interesting, fascinating, incredible that God, in describing in His word, makes sure that the name of the man who helped His son would be recorded for everyone to read for all the ages? You know his name - Simon of Cyrene. Probably, undoubtedly, the plan of his day had not included picking up a cross and carrying it to Golgotha for another man. There he is in the crowd, compelled by the soldiers to come out of the crowd, pick up the cross and carry the load for the Son of God who is about to be placed on that cross. I do believe that God in His plan and oversight of our lives puts us in places where we can reach out and pick someone up and we have no idea of the significance of what we're doing impacting that life in a glorious way.

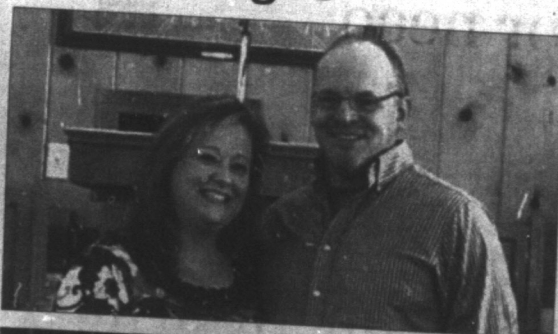
It is probably safe to say that everybody you see today, whether you know them or they are strangers, has probably had storms come through their lives. Broken things, ruined things, have been left behind and just in passing God wants to use you to help heal the scars and restore a soul.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

Staff Changes



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) FIRST CHURCH, EUPORA, has called John Herring as minister of music/associate pastor. He and his wife Shellie have one daughter, Bailey. They come from Bush, La. HOLLY SPRINGS CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, welcomes pastor Matt Greer and family. TRINITY CHURCH, LAUREL, has called Bill Blair as pastor. Shown are Blair, his wife Kelly, and children Luke and Lani.



College News



The MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE table tennis team won the Dixie Division tournament on the Clinton campus Oct. 18, with the University of West Florida taking second place. This tournament marked the first one under the leadership of new coach Cheng Li, the top collegiate table tennis player in North America last season. He also serves as the team captain. Shown are table tennis team players Yichi Zhang, Cheng Li and Xiajin Lin.

In other College News:

► Mississippi College is holding its second Fall Preview Day Nov. 8. Registration at the B.C. Rogers Student Center begins at 8 a.m. Speakers include Lee Royce, Jim Turcotte, Kyle Brantley, Michael Wright, and Anna Mortimer. Students may visit classes, meet with department representatives, learn about civic clubs and social tribes and other organizations, and attend a football game between the Choctaws and West Alabama. For information, visit www.mc.edu/admissions or call (601) 925-3800.

Dropping the Ball—Voting

"Ballot" comes from the Italian word "ballotta" which means "small ball". Centuries ago voting was done by dropping either a black or a white ball into a receptacle. The white ball signified a yes vote and the black ball designated a no vote. Today we tap a screen and our vote is immediately cast. Whether it is dropping the ball or tapping the screen, the most important fact is that we DO it.

In less than a week we go to our voting places and exercise one of the greatest privileges any civilization could ever have, the opportunity to select its governing officials. The choice is quite simple, go vote and be a part of the election process or stay home and let someone else decide for you. Perhaps some of you are thinking right now, "I vote but I always lose so I think I will stay home." Put that thought aside.

The fact that you go vote, regardless of the outcome, says a lot about who you are.

It says you honor and revere those who sacrificed their lives to provide you with the opportunity to vote. It says you are a responsible citizen who cares about your country. It says you care about providing a future for yourself, your offspring and all those who will come behind you. Needless to say, your vote is critical to fair and ethical government. It does matter.

Recently in our state two alcohol referendums, one in Pontotoc and the other in Amory, highlighted the significance of one or two votes. Both cities were voting whether or not to allow the sale of alcohol beverages within city limits. Anti-liquor groups worked extremely hard in Pontotoc and Amory to keep their cities free of liquor stores. Pontotoc lost by two votes. No doubt some have said, "If I had gone and voted our city would still be without liquor sales." If one or two votes had changed or a couple more had voted,



with Jimmy Porter

"The fact that you go vote, regardless of the outcome, says a lot about who you are. It says you honor and revere those who sacrificed their lives to provide you with the opportunity to vote. It says you are a responsible citizen who cares about your country. It says you care about providing a future for yourself, your offspring and all those who will come behind you."

Pontotoc would still be "dry." Amory, on the other hand, was able to rally enough voters to defeat the referendum by several votes. Christians and concerned citizens are to be commended in both cities for their efforts.

November 4th is a huge day for our state and an even larger day for our country. We will be voting on whom we send to Washington to represent us. The Christian Action Commission cannot tell you how to vote, but we can ask you to GO VOTE!! Some of you may have decided to sit out this election due to the controversial primary elections but if you do, you will be failing in your Christian and civic responsibilities. So, please GO VOTE.

Do not forget to take some form of photo ID when you go to the polls to vote. There are at least ten different types of ID that are acceptable. If you do not have proper photo ID, go to the county Circuit Clerk's office and get a free Mississippi

pi Voter Identification Card. The Mississippi Secretary of State's website has all the information necessary to make your voting experience easy and enjoyable. If you need a ride to your voting precinct, call toll free 1-855-868-3745 and transportation will be provided. Secretary of State Hosemann and his staff have done everything possible to make voting accessible to all.

Please pray for our state and our country prior to November 4th. It is important that we seek the Lord's guidance and favor as we cast our ballots. America needs men and women who will take a brave, strong and Godly stance for righteousness. May we as Christians join hands and hearts and then go vote on the Fourth of November.

Porter serves as executive director-treasurer for the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. He can be contacted at 601-292-3332 or jporter@christianaction.com.

GuideStone assist for needy retirees sees welcome boost

DALLAS (BP) — Mission: Dignity recipients received a welcome increase in their October assistance payments, with the neediest seeing their monthly grant amounts grow by 12% to \$450 for singles and \$600 for couples.

Qualified individuals receiving the largest payouts must have at least 25 years of Southern Baptist ministerial service and must meet guidelines for income and assets. Eligible recipients with at least 10 years of full-time, salaried Southern Baptist service receive \$225 per month, if single, and couples receive \$300.

"Since 1918, GuideStone has been on a mission to help retired Southern Baptist pastors and their widows in meeting their basic needs," said GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins. "This step helps ensure that these dear soldiers of the cross will have the comfort and dignity they've earned in their declining years."

The increases are possible

as more and more Southern Baptist churches and members have embraced and supported the program, GuideStone noted.

Mission:Dignity will now pay out a little more than seven million dollars annually to more than 1,800 recipients. GuideStone receives no Cooperative Program funding for Mission:Dignity, and no GuideStone Funds underwrite the ministry. All proceeds come from the gifts of individuals, local churches, and Sunday school classes. One hundred percent of all gifts go directly to the aid of recipients.

Additionally, individuals and churches who purchase either of O.S. Hawkins' recent books, *The Joshua Code: 52 Scripture Verses Every Believer Should Know*, and *The Jesus Code: 52 Scripture Questions Every Believer Should Answer*, support the ministry. All royalties benefit Mission:Dignity.

John Ambra, direc-

tor of development for Mission:Dignity, said he invites new and currently participating churches, groups and individuals to grow with Mission:Dignity by increasing their donations to reflect the increased amounts.

"Through the years, many donors have chosen to fully underwrite the support for an individual or a couple by sending a donation each month that matches the payout amount," Ambra said. "Of course, gifts of any amount are welcome, and 100% of contributions still go to those in need with nothing ever used for operating costs."

"Those monthly gifts sustain the ministry throughout the year and are so appreciated. We're encouraging donors to prayerfully consider updating their budgets for the coming year. By growing with us now, Mission:Dignity will be well-positioned to care for the needs of those on whose legacy we stand today."

David & Edna
HILL

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WE CALL IT A *MISSION*.

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AND THOUSANDS LIKE THEM TODAY.

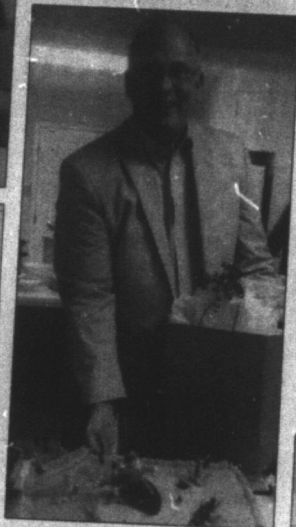
Each month, Mission:Dignity provides critical financial assistance to thousands of retired Southern Baptist ministers, widows and their spouses. BUT WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU.

Mission:Dignity
Assisting Retired Ministers and Spouses

Just for the Record



The GAs of **MACEDONIA CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN**, enjoyed chicken and rice with pineapple sauce recently, cooked with an Indonesian recipe. The girls have been learning about Indonesian missions.



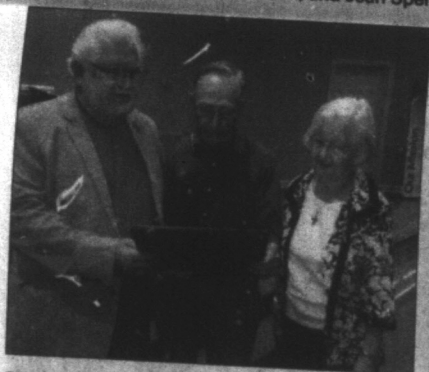
OAK GROVE CHURCH, MENDENHALL, honored pastor Gayden Harrell Oct. 19 during the church's pastor appreciation service. He received an iPad, a reception, and many thank you cards.



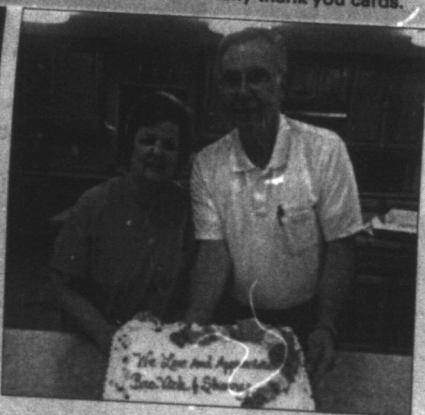
Members of the senior adult Keeping in Touch club from **MONTICELLO CHURCH, MONTICELLO**, recently toured the State Capitol, with capitol employees serving as tour guides. Tim McCaffrey, pastor.



The WMU of **PHILADELPHIA CHURCH, LAFAYETTE ASSOCIATION**, made baby blankets and donated them to First Choice Sav-A-Life in New Albany, along with New Testaments in honor of cancer survivors Lyndie Scott and Janet Tarrant. Shown are Twanda Coffee, Scott, Tarrant, and Jean Spence.



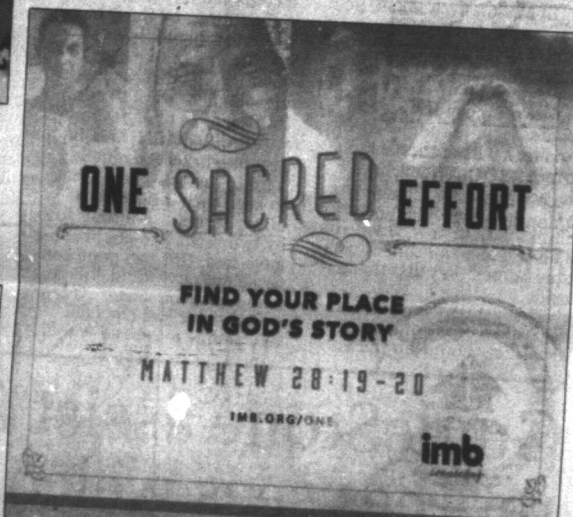
MACEDONIA CHURCH, UNION COUNTY, honored Leon Wilson Oct. 12 for serving as a deacon for 59 years, 55 of those at Macedonia. He and his wife Marie are shown receiving a framed certificate from Johnny Garrison.



GILLSBURG CHURCH, GILLSBURG, honored Victor and Sherry Walsh during pastor appreciation week.



CALVARY CHURCH, SILVER CREEK, ordained Joey Jackson as deacon Sept. 28. Shown, front, are Kelly Miller, Greg Hartzog, Jackson, Teresa Jackson, pastor Trey Spangler, and Dennis Daughdrill; back, Zeno Cone, Mike Alexander, Larry Bass, and Ray Fortenberry.



MISSIONARY APPOINTMENT SERVICE

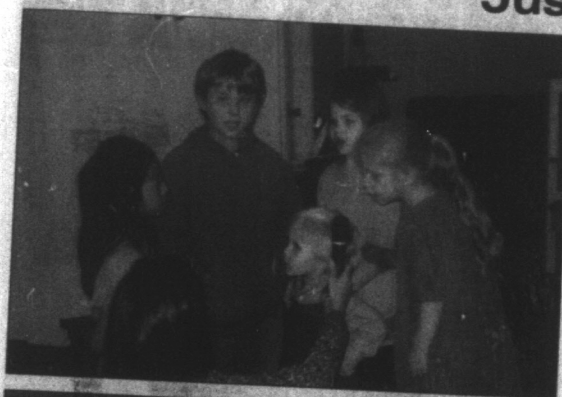
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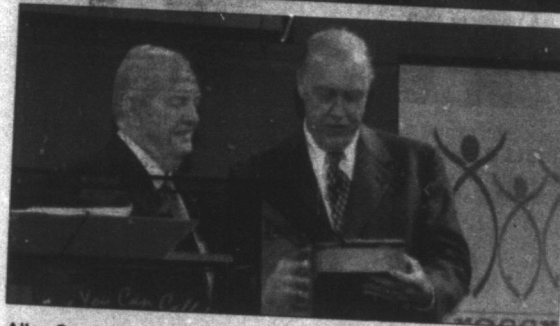
Just for the Record



Children from **NEW BETHEL CHURCH, CARROLL COUNTY**, sang Jesus Loves Little Children Oct. 19 in the morning worship service. Shown, clockwise, are Lexie Corder, Hunter Staten, Clayton Ellett, Jaycee Ellett, and Ella Byford. Director was Camille Parker.



At a recent baptismal service Fletcher Moorman, pastor, **CARROLLTON CHURCH, CARROLLTON**, used the service to teach the children of the church the meaning of baptism.



Allen Stephens, Associational Missions Director, **RANKIN COUNTY ASSOCIATION**, is shown presenting Perry Sanderford, executive director, Crossroads Counseling Center, with a commemorative box celebrating his 25th year with Crossroads.

In other Church News:

► **Sunrise Church, Leake County**, is having a fall festival Oct. 31, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m., featuring stew for supper, candy, games, and inflatables.

► **First Church, Gautier**, is hosting a fall festival Nov. 1, 1 - 4 p.m., featuring games, inflatables, cake walk, popcorn, rock climbing wall, hayride, hot dogs, nachos, and candy. Free.

► The GA's of **Bethany Church, Potts Camp**, toured the Baptist Children's Village Farrow Manor campus. They took supplies raised during the WMU's Christmas in August project. Donald Worsham, pastor.



Rick Burgess, from the Rick & Bubba Show, was guest speaker in two morning services at **BEULAH CHURCH, DECATUR**, Oct. 19. He is shown with pastor Gary Rivers.



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Patterson cleared in SWBTS controversy over admissions

FORT WORTH — An investigation prompted by Southwestern Seminary President Paige Patterson's decision to admit a Muslim into the school's biblical archaeology doctoral program is complete and could trigger a bylaw change to improve "accountability" and "flexibility in pursuing ministry opportunities," trustees said Oct. 22 in a statement.



PATTERSON

Patterson apologized to the Southern Baptist Convention in June for making an exception to the school's admissions policy, which requires a profession of faith and an expression of a call to ministry.

"We admittedly recognize that there are inconsistencies between the seminary's bylaws and the actions of its administration and board," the trustees' statement said. "We acknowledge an

exception should have been requested until such time that the bylaws could have been amended for launching various initiatives."

During his report to messengers at the annual meeting in June, Patterson explained that the student who was admitted to the archaeology program is a Palestinian from a Muslim background who is "a remarkable young man, very open at this point to the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

"I made an exception to the rule that I assumed, probably wrongly, that the president has a right to make if he feels it is important," Patterson told messengers. "He was admitted as a special student in the Ph.D. program, and that is not with Cooperative Program assistance."

Patterson said he was most concerned with "what I will say to God when I stand before the judgment seat of the Lord" regarding the decision.

The student, whose identity was revealed online last spring by critical bloggers, has since with-

drawn from the program in the wake of the controversy.

"We join with our fellow Southern Baptists in appreciation for and admiration of the evangelistic heart of our president, Paige Patterson," the Southwestern trustees, in their statement, said. "Any violations of the seminary bylaws were done in a good-faith enthusiasm to pursue the seminary's purpose, as set forth in its articles of incorporation."

"It is our desire and intent," the trustees said in their statement, "to ensure that the seminary's governing documents allow development of ministries to meet opportunities, as yet unknown to any of us, always being mindful of the great stewardship Southern Baptists have placed in our hands."

Trustee Mike Boyd, chairman of the bylaws and policies committee and senior pastor of Wallace Memorial Church in Knoxville, Tenn., said during the board's meeting on campus Oct. 22 that trustees will seek to "get all the language where it needs to be."

Texas abortion clinics close, reopen during legal battle

NEW ORLEANS (BP and local reports) — A lawsuit challenging abortion regulations in Texas is being fast-tracked through the appeals process and most likely will go to the U.S. Supreme Court.

As *Whole Woman's Health v. Lakey* is banded in the appeals process, Texas abortion clinics have closed and now reopened since Sept. 1, the date when the House Bill 2 was scheduled to go into effect.

In the latest iteration, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 6-3 in mid-October that HB 2 cannot go into effect while two key provisions are under appeal. The case is now being expedited. Briefs should be filed before year's end and oral arguments heard as early as January before the U.S. Court of Appeals Fifth Circuit in New Orleans, according to Denise Burke, an attorney and vice president for legal affairs for Americans United for Life, a nonprofit organization that drafts pro-life public policy and law.

Burke told the Southern Baptist TEXAN she is confident the contested provisions can stand up to the appellate court's scrutiny. But she would not presume to "read the tea leaves" about a Supreme Court ruling based on its five-sentence Oct. 14 statement vacating a Fifth Circuit ruling to

allow enforcement of the law, enacted in July 2013.

The Supreme Court statement named the dissenting justices, an unusual move when considering emergency applications, with Justices Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito voting to deny the hearing. A majority decision to deny would have left the Fifth Circuit's Oct. 2 judgment in place that allowed enforcement of the law, closing all but eight abortion clinics in Texas.

Scalia was appointed to the court by U.S. President Ronald Reagan. Thomas was appointed to the court by U.S. President George H.W. Bush. Alito was appointed to the court by U.S. President George W. Bush.

Voting in favor of the hearing were Chief Justice John Roberts, an appointee of George W. Bush; Anthony Kennedy, an appointee of Reagan; Steven Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, both appointees of U.S. President Bill Clinton; Sonya Sotomayor and Elena Kagan, both appointees of U.S. President Barack Obama;

Some of the clinics forced to close Oct. 3 due to full implementation of the law began to open again following the high court ruling.

The Supreme Court ruling reinstated an injunction im-

posed by federal Judge Lee Yeakel Aug. 29 halting the implementation of a provision requiring abortion clinics meet ambulatory service center (ASC) standards.

Only four other states have a similar provision. Missouri's law was challenged and upheld. Alabama and Pennsylvania ASC laws have not been challenged. Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, a Democrat, will likely succeed in rolling back the provision in that state, Burke said.

Abortion providers claim the ASC regulations, like the rest of HB 2, are unnecessary and created solely to make operating abortion clinics in Texas untenable, but Burke said the provision forces clinics to operate according to the same standards as other outpatient clinics in Texas.

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PSYAKPOAV PKV AKAUYAQ YK CMHN

UYKV RC FYIWAV FMNWQ, CAO KMF

ZPOZ ZA NAIMKIYSAV.

IMSMQQYPKQ MKA: OFAKOC-MKA

C = Y

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans 12:20

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Graham tapped to lead 2015 National Day of Prayer

PLANO, Texas (BP) — The National Day of Prayer Task Force has named Jack Graham, former two-term president of the Southern Baptist Convention, as honorary chairman for the 2015 National Day of Prayer.



GRAHAM

Graham leads 37,000-member Prestonwood Church, which includes three locations in the Dallas area. He is also the voice of PowerPoint Ministries, a radio and television broadcast ministry from the Prestonwood

pulpit that shares the Gospel throughout the world.

The 64th annual National Day of Prayer will be held on May 7, in Washington, D.C. Graham will lead the members of Congress in prayer. The theme for 2015 will be "Lord, Hear Our Cry."

"It is a privilege to lead the National Day of Prayer," Graham said. "More than anything, in this desperate hour, may our hearts cry out to God for the healing of our nation's spiritual brokenness. May Jesus be exalted and may God's people be awakened to a new obedience to fulfill the Great Commission."

Written by Graham, the following prayer below will be read simultaneously throughout the

country at noon (EDT) where prayer observances are held:

Heavenly Father, we come to You in the Name that is above every name — Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Our hearts cry out to You. Knowing that You are a prayer-answering, faithful God — the One we trust in times like these — we ask that You renew our spirits, revive our churches, and heal our land. We repent of our sins and ask for Your grace and power to save us. Hear our cry, oh God, and pour out Your Spirit upon us that we may walk in obedience to Your Word. We are desperate for Your tender mercies. We are broken and humbled before You. Forgive us, and in the

power of Your great love, lift us up to live in Your righteousness. We pray for our beloved nation. May we repent and return to You and be a light to the nations. And we pray for our leaders and ask that You give them wisdom and faith to follow You. Preserve and protect us, for You are our refuge and only hope. Deliver us from all fears except to fear You, and may we courageously stand in the Truth that sets us free. We pray with expectant faith and grateful hearts. In Jesus' name, our Savior. Amen.

The National Day of Prayer was established in 1952 when Congress approved a resolution calling on the president to establish such an annual event. It

was first observed by President Harry S. Truman. The resolution was amended in 1988 to establish the first Thursday of May for the annual observance.

"The president shall issue each year a proclamation designating the first Thursday in May as a National Day of Prayer," the resolution states, "on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches, in groups and as individuals."

Graham, who has led Prestonwood since 1989, is the author of numerous books, including *Unseen: Angels, Satan, Heaven, Hell and Winning the Battle for Eternity*; *A Man of God*; *Powering Up*; and, with his wife Deb, *Courageous Parenting*.

CLASSIFIEDS

MULLINS STATION BAPTIST CHURCH IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A **BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR**. Mail resumes, along with any audio CDs or website address with a link to view a sample sermon to Search Committee, Mullins Station Baptist Church, 1170 Mullins Station Rd., Memphis TN 38134 or e-mail to susan@msbcmemphis.org

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HOUSTON

cont. from p. 1

■ Rick Scarborough, president of Vision America in Lufkin, Texas, and a former Baptist pastor.

■ David and Jason Benham, brothers whose show scheduled to air this fall on the Home & Garden Television cable network was canceled after their traditional Christian views on homosexuality were criticized by homosexual activists.

The subpoenas were issued in relation to a lawsuit over the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance, known to supporters as HERO and recently passed by the Houston City Council, which would grant the LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) community far-reaching rights including the freedom to use bathrooms of the opposite sex.

Openly lesbian Houston Mayor Annise Parker has de-

fended the subpoenas despite a national outrage.

Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, wrote on his blog Oct. 20, "Southern Baptist family, we must rise up together and be clear in Houston and beyond. While many in mainline denominations will shy away from this discussion, and some evangelicals may also be silent, as Baptists, we must rise up and be very clear."

Pointing to the Baptist Faith and Message, Floyd stated Southern Baptists "believe that the state owes every church protection and freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual end."

Floyd urged Baptist to express support and commit to pray for the five ministers who are involved in the subpoenas by using #4Houston5 through social media. For more information and updates on I Stand Sunday, including home viewing, how churches can host the simulcast, and how to locate a host church, visit istandsunday.com.

CARTER

cont. from p. 2

Should churches speak out and provide leadership in educating people on the subject of religious freedom? If churches do not do it, it fades away. When it is lost, it is lost.

When I was a small child, I was taught that the three institutions upon which our society is built are home, school, and church. These were then under local control. Today, all of these are under attack. The church must be the standard bearer for freedom of religion. What can be more central to a decent and moral society than freedom of religion?

In our country, the people hold the ultimate power. Let us be responsible and trustworthy in the exercise of our rights and power by voting in every election.

Carter is a retired attorney and member of First Church, Jackson.

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2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



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GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to contribute to others through this medium. This feature is hopefully helpful to those who need help and support. These gifts are not cash but are in the form of honor and memory.

JUNE 2014

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Tuscola BC

JULY 2014

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Mr. & Mrs. Hubert T. Kendrick
Mr. Donald Griffin
Jerusalem BC
Allen Hobbs
Mr. & Mrs. John Hobbs
Ms. Mary Hodges
Jerusalem BC
Geneva Lamana
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JULY 2014

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Robert Cecil Andrews
Mrs. Charlotte Mosley
L. C. Anthony
Mike & June Harrison
Mr. Douglas Weldon Aultman
Ray and Lee Rounsaville
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O.
Crosthwait, Jr.
Maurice Beatty
Pat Keigley
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan
Mr. James (Jack) Bailey
Mr. & Mrs. Loyd Smith, Jr. &
Family
Joseph K (Joe) Barnett
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert T. Kendrick
Ms. Ireta W. Graham
Arthur & Alicia P. Burnett
Dr. Charles Bass
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox
Hazel Beesley Hwy 61 S
Mr. & Mrs. Ron K. Phillips
Herman Berry
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald B. Bosarge
Calvin Bingham
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Clyde Boyd
Mr. Owen R. Warren
W. A. Breland
Mr. & Mrs. Carl E. Howard
Mrs. Hilda Brewer
Arlington Heights BC
Hilda Mae Bridges
Whitesand BC
Mrs. Jean Brumfield
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne R. Hall
Mrs. Mary F. Sumrall Garner
Jahazel Buckley
Mr. Ted Buckley
Jerry Caffey
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Easley
Steven Cain
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Margaret Case
Mr. & Mrs. James A. DeLee

Mr. & Mrs. James E. Clark
Young at Heart Singers, BC
McComb
Bobby Chain
Ms. Jane Davis
Minnie W. Chandler
Ms. Patsy Kilgore
Patsy Kilgore
Joanne Williams Chatoney
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O.
Crosthwait, Jr.
Mr. McDavid Cochran
Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC
Randy Coghlan
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Paul Wayne Combs
Mr. Joseph A. Combs, III
Sarah Cook
Mrs. Carol J. Rather
Travis Cooper
Pleasant Hill BC
Marty Cornwell
Mrs. Kathy Dee Patrick
Mrs. Laura Culliver
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox
Celia Culpepper
Mr. & Mrs. Lars Johnson
Edward Cutts
Mr. & Mrs. Bennie Nutt
Maxine Darden
Mr. & Mrs. Lamar D. Tuminello
William S. Darsey Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Ron K. Phillips
Mickey Daughdrill
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox
Carol McReynolds Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Myron Johnson
Adam Day
Sally Hefner
Sandra Deason
McCool BC
Mrs. Ruby Dickens
Ms. Angie L. Myers
Mr. D. M. Dixon
Dr. & Mrs. Victor L. Walsh
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Dixon &
Family
Mr. & Mrs. M. E. Newton, Jr.
Lewis Dyess
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert T. Kendrick
Todd Eaves

Pete Burkes and Barbara Dorsey
Mr. Hugh Elkin
Mrs. Edith M. Aldridge
R. (Bubba) Evans
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O.
Crosthwait, Jr.
Elna Ezell
Mrs. Mary K. Kidd
Mildred Tyson Floyd
Mrs. Susan Smith
Mr. Eddie Followay
Rev. & Mrs. William B. Webb
Mr. Hal Fortenberry
Anne N. Hamilton
MS Anesthesia Group
Bobbie Foster
Mike & June Harrison
Stan Francis
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Green
Mrs. Inez Freeman
Mr. & Mrs. Bryan Dean
Mildred Freeny
Mrs. Hope Hawkins
Mr. Joseph (Joe) Gary
Dr. & Mrs. John W. Bowlin
Mr. C. G. (Cap) Gaston Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Jesse R. Johnson
Peyton E. Goldbold Jr.
Eddiction BC
Amanda Griffith
Whitesand BC
Mrs. Gordon Gross
Mrs. Helen Brown
Bill Hale
Pine Burr BC
Bill Hall
Rev. & Mrs. William B. Webb
Anna Kathryn Hamric
Mrs. Ethelene J. Blanton
Katie Harbin
Gene and Cheryl McMichael
Jesse Harmon
Ms. Jane Davis
Drew Harrington
Mr. & Mrs. Jackie Wooley
Wayne Hebert
Unity BC
Toni Hemeter
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert T. Kendrick
Ms. Ireta W. Graham
Reynolds Henderson

Kaye Henderson and Gregg
Elaine Herring
Mr. W. B. Herring
Mr. Floyd Herrington
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox
Elliott Hinton
Mr. Clarence M. Shannon
Patsy Boyd Holmes
Memorial Hospital Laboratory
Helen Hopkins
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Carl E. Howard II
Mr. & Mrs. Carl E. Howard
Nelda Howard
Tony & Susan Kinton
Freida F. Jenkins
Mr. & Mrs. Alton Taylor
R. Clint Johnson Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. R. N. Humphreys
Nell Joiner
Nina Herbert & Russellan Sinn
Rosa DeLee Kent
Mr. & Mrs. James A. DeLee
Bubba Lane
J. W. Fly
Mr. & Mrs. Carl F. DeLoach
Mr. & Mrs. Jack McRee
Providence BC
Teddy Ford
Frank Loftus
College Hill Heights Baptist
Church
Russell E. Lovett
Young at Heart Singers, FBC
McComb
Sandy Magee
Mr. & Mrs. Ron D. Craddock
Joe B. Manton
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Manton
Mary Katherine Mathis
Mr. & Mrs. Dan D. Wright, Sr.
Mrs. May McLeod
Mrs. Joe D. Roberts
Carla McMinn
Mr. & Mrs. Percy J. Peeler
Mrs. Bonnie McMullan
Mr. & Mrs. George R. Faulk
Herschel Morgan
Mr. & Mrs. James H. Chase
Mrs. Irene R. Morris
Mr. & Mrs. Jennings Dixon

BCV EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The BCV employs Christian, mission-minded, husband and wife teams, without dependent children or pets, to serve in the position of Houseparents. The couples must be mature Christian adults with personal integrity, character and of good reputation with standards and ethics expected of any member of The Baptist Children's Village staff.

They receive a salary with benefits and are provided a private bedroom and meals while on duty. The primary job responsibility of Houseparents is to maintain a home-like environment that models healthy, Christian family living for children and youth residents. They are the primary caregivers and help with everything from transportation and homework to laundry and meals when on duty.

Houseparent responsibilities are varied and somewhat dependent upon which campus and to which cottage the couple is assigned. However, all Houseparents need to be in good physical, mental and emotional health. They must be cooperative and comfortable working in a team environment.

To apply for the current Houseparent openings, please contact Celeste Cade at ccade@baptistchildrensvillage.com or 601-922-2242.

A complete job description and application may be downloaded at www.baptistchildrensvillage.com.

The Perfect Offering • Hebrews 9:11-15

As I write this to you, I am planning on retrieving our family tent from storage this evening and over the weekend, spending the night in it with my intensely eager children, Logan (10), Mary (8) and Micah (5). Since I mentioned the possibility of putting out the tent (an annual fall tradition) I have been badgered non-stop until I fully committed to get it out and put it up. I have enjoyed camping all my life, but rarely have had time to do it since the ministry days. Now, however, with children, camping is no longer an option, it is demanded by the kiddos, and I don't know who is more excited about it, me or them. It's interesting that I have the privilege to write this lesson the day we break out the family tent. As you will notice by verse 11, the more perfect tent is the location of Christ's entrance, where he as our High Priest has reversed the curse on humanity for those that believe in Him and his blood sacrifice for our sins.

"With 9:11 the author embarks on his Christological arguments concerning the superiority of the Son's offering for sin. As is his custom, he provides a brief introduction to these arguments (9:11-12) and follows that up by their more extensive explication (9:13-28)." (Hebrews, Guthrie, Logos)

Christ's Entry (11-12) "The 'good things' are all those blessings associated with the new covenant (8:6), blessings that have now been ushered in by Christ's establishment of that better agreement." (Hebrews, Guthrie, Logos) "The good things that are ours in Christ come to us in two stages: united to him, we are indeed the heirs of all things (Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23), but it is only hereafter that we enter

it to the fullness of our heritage (1 Pet. 1:4; 1 Jn. 3:2). (Hebrews, Hughes, 327)

What is the 'greater and more perfect tent' that Christ entered? Guthrie quotes Hughes, "What he has in mind is simply Christ's passage into the very presence of God in heaven (8:1). The accuracy of this reading may be seen in a parallel text (9:24), where he writes, 'For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for

us in God's presence.'" (Hebrews, Guthrie, Logos) Christ has accomplished this through the spilling of his own blood, not animals', on the cross at Calvary, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Christ's Superior Sacrifice (13-14) Here Hebrews is making a comparison between the Old Testament sacrifices of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:1-25) and the red heifer sacrifice of Numbers

19. "These two verses form an 'argument from lesser to greater,' which reasons: 'If something is true in a lesser situation, it is

true to an even greater degree in a greater situation.' Here the sacrifice of animals constitutes the lesser circumstance and the offering of the blood of Christ the greater." (Hebrews, Guthrie, Logos) The implication being if the blood of earthly, finite animals can somehow temporarily sanctify humanity on an annual basis, how much more can the sin free, Spirit

born pure blood of the Son of God make us whole in body and spirit (mind) before God for all eternity?

Christ's Mediation (15) Because Jesus offered himself as a "ransom for many" giving his life, now those that believe in Christ, may receive the promised eternal inheritance. In order for this inheritance to be available, there had to be a death, which Christ fulfilled at the cross. Mark 14:24, "24 And he said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.'

As I contemplate the evening tonight with my children, the excitement in their eyes and faces about the "weekend in the tent with Dad," I can only imagine how excited we will all be to spend eternity in the "heavenly tent made without hands" with our God. My children will feel safe and secure knowing that their Dad is in the tent with them (although they all ran inside when they heard a pack of coyote pups yipping last night), how much more safe should we all feel knowing that our Triune God has already gone before us and prepared a place for us in the heavenly tent made without hands."

Hazzard is pastor of Woodland Church, Columbus.

Overcome Being Forgotten • Genesis 39: 21-23; 40: 5-8, 20-23

In early September, since he couldn't be with her for her eighth birthday, a pastor wrote a letter to his daughter, Kebekka Grace. This wasn't the kind of letter one would expect from a father to his daughter. But Pastor Saeed Abedini, writing from a prison cell in Iran, felt his children needed the letter's message.

According to Baptist Press (www.bpnews.net), Abedini is charged with threatening national security "by planting house churches in Iran years earlier." News reports say since his incarceration in September 2012, "he has faced death threats and beatings in prison and has received inadequate medical care." He also has been unable to see his wife and children.

Even as Abedini suffers greatly for his faith, he writes, "Jesus allows me to be kept here for His glory." He knows his children and others are wondering why God isn't answering prayers for his release. This faithful believer says the answer to the "why" can be found in the "Who". While experiencing abysmal treatment, Abedini confidently affirms Christ's control.

In return for Joseph's purity and integrity in refusing the advances of his master's wife, the young man ends up with a definite demotion; he's jailed in a dungeon in Potiphar's house, "where the king's prisoners were confined" (Gen. 39:20 NIV). Incredibly, the place of his incarceration

would prove quite providential. God was working during this dire situation!

Even though it seemed he was "out of sight, out of mind", Joseph continually experienced his heavenly Father's watch-care. Verse 21 says the Lord was with him, and He showed him kindness. God was also influencing the prison warden, granting Joseph favor in his eyes, and the young Hebrew was put in charge of other prisoners and the daily goings-on of prison life (vss. 22-23). These phrases are strikingly similar to Genesis 39:2-4.

As time went on, the king's cupbearer and the baker offended their master in some way, and they were incarcerated. These men had held high positions in the king's entourage: the chief cupbearer supervised a staff and was responsible for tasting the ruler's wine before serving it to ensure it did not contain poison; the chief baker and his staff were responsible for the king's food, which no doubt had to meet royal standards consistently.

Verse 4 says, "The captain of the guard

assigned them to Joseph, and he attended them." One morning, he was met with two downcast faces. When he asked why the men were so sad, they told him they'd both had a confusing dream during the night, but were discouraged since "there is no one to interpret them" (vs. 8). Supposedly, some in Pharaoh's court could interpret dreams, but they were no longer accessible. However, Joseph knew whom to seek:

"Do not interpretations belong to God?" he asked, and encouraged them to share their dreams with him.

The cupbearer shared his dream, and Joseph revealed that in three days, Pharaoh would restore him to his former position. Joseph asked the man to remember him and show kindness by mentioning him to Pharaoh, to procure his release from his unjust sentence (vss. 14-15).

Hearing this exciting interpretation, the baker shared his dream; however, he didn't get the same good news. Joseph predicted that in three days, the king would behead the man and hang him on a tree.

On the third day, a great feast was held to celebrate Pharaoh's birthday, and both of these predictions came to pass, just as Joseph had declared. But sadly, the cupbearer "did not remember Joseph; he forgot him."

Such desolate words. We've all experienced times in our life when we've been forgotten or neglected. We sometimes feel God has forgotten us, too. Instead, He is skillfully and lovingly working on our life's tapestry, weaving the threads - some dark and some light - into a pattern of exquisite beauty. It's been said we can only see the jumbled back, but God admires the work of art from the front!

Author Bill Crowder says such experiences "build into us the indispensable character quality of patient trust. James 1:2-4 says this can be learned only through trials." During such times, consider Joseph's example: although his personal predicament was undesirable, he still sought to serve others.

In Abedini's letter, he encouraged his daughter with this reminder: "God is in control of the whole world and everything that is happening in it is for His good purpose, for His glory, and will be worked out for our good."

May his words fortify our faith today.

Maniscalco is a member of Lemoyne Boulevard Church in Biloxi.

Bible Studies for Life

with Ann Maniscalco



Revivals & Homecomings

► **First Church, Mendenhall:** Homecoming, Nov. 2; service, 10 a.m., followed by lunch; Earl Clark, speaker; Bob Jones, music.
► **Hickory Ridge Church,**

Florence: Revival, Nov. 2 - 5; 7 p.m. nightly; Paul Tsika, speaker; Gerald Simmons, worship leader.

► **First Church, Stonewall:** Revival, Nov. 2 - 5; Sun.,

Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:50 a.m., followed by potluck lunch and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Matthew White, speaker; Lee Robinson, music; Nick Ulmer, pastor.

► **First Church, Itta Bena:** Homecoming, Nov. 2; worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by

lunch; Steve Burton, speaker; Kenny White, music.

► **Bellevue Church, Mattesburg:** Homecoming, Nov. 2; services, 10 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Glen Davis, speaker; Troy Carter, music; William McMullan, pastor.

► **North Columbia Church,**

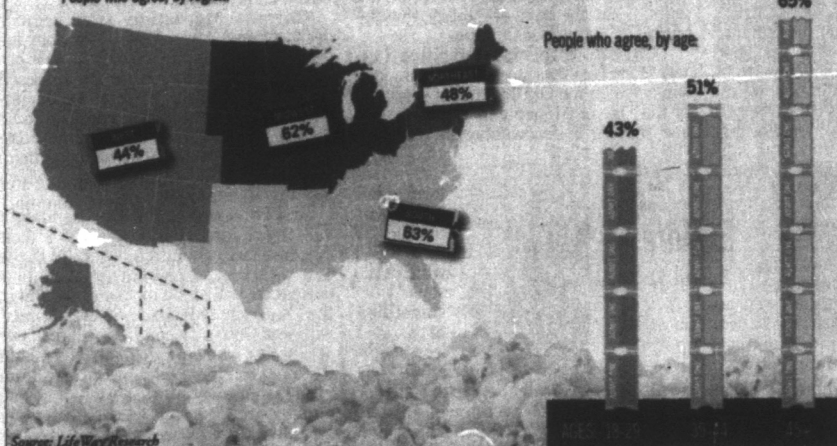
Columbia: Revival, Nov. 2 - 5; Sun., Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; morning service, 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner on the ground and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., lunch service at noon and 6:30 p.m.; Bob Pitman, speaker; Steve and Becky Carver & Family, music; Joe Wiggins, pastor.

Jesus at the box office

The majority of Americans (56 percent) want more than popcorn with their movies—they want to see Christian values. The exception is young adults who are more likely to disagree than agree with this sentiment.

"I wish there were more movies that reflected Christian values."

People who agree, by region:



Faith-themed movies on the rise at American box offices

NASHVILLE (BP) — Hollywood's newfound attraction to religious and Bible-based motion pictures continues to drive sales at the box office in 2014, according to a study by LifeWay Research.

Four such films have already earned more than \$50 million each in ticket sales, reports Boxoffice Mojo.com. Those films — Noah, Heaven is for Real, Son of God, and God's Not Dead — are among the top 20 grossing films of 2014.

Movie audiences apparently want more, a survey of 1,054 Americans from Nashville-based LifeWay Research revealed. Researchers found that 56% of Americans say they wish there were more movies with Christian values.

"Faith-based movies are no longer a niche," said Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research. "It's smart economics. If you make a film that appeals to that audience, they will show up."

Movies with an explicitly Christian message, like God's Not Dead, have done especially well. The independent film was made for two million dollars and has earned more than \$59 million at the box office. That's more than secular, high-budget projects like Muppets Most Wanted or the critically-acclaimed The Grand Budapest Hotel.

Kris Fuhr, founder of Moviegal Marketing, said Christian movie fans want films with a clear presentation of faith. That's been true in the past for films like Fireproof and Courageous, as well as more recent movies like Son of God and Mom's Night Out.

"When you have a movie where the title is almost

a doctrinal statement, the audience will come out," she said. "People want their faith to be affirmed." Films with a more subtle faith message may not do as well, Fuhr said.

In the survey, LifeWay Research asked Americans to respond to the statement: "I wish there were more movies that reflected Christian values." Those who go to church weekly are most likely to agree (91%). Those who never go to church are least likely to agree (18%).

Self-identified born again, evangelical, or fundamentalist Christians are more likely to agree (84%) than other Americans (45%).

Americans who live in the Midwest (62%) and South (63%) are also more interested in more Christian films than those in the Northeast (48%) or the West (44%).

Two-thirds or more of middle-aged and older Americans agree, including those ages 45-54 (63%), 55-64 (66%), and 65 and older (65%). Americans under 30 (43%) are least interested in more films with Christian values.

Methodology: A sample of an online panel representing the adult population of the United States was invited to participate. Responses were weighted by region, age, ethnicity, gender, and income to more accurately reflect the population. The completed sample is 1,054 online surveys. The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error from this panel does not exceed +3.1%. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

"Faith-based movies are no longer a niche. It's smart economics. If you make a film that appeals to that audience, they will show up."

Scott McConnell

director of
LifeWay
Research

Homosexuality rends Catholic Synod on Family

NASHVILLE (BP) — Differences between the interim and final reports from a meeting of Catholic bishops in Rome reflect significant differences within the church's hierarchy regarding homosexuality, a Baptist seminary professor has noted.

"Deep division appears obvious," Jeffrey Riley, professor of ethics at New Orleans Seminary, told Baptist Press (BP) in written comments. "How broad the division is difficult to say. ... Some bishops appear captured by western cultural notions that stress sexual freedom rather than a freedom that comes by obeying the clear teaching of Scripture."

Riley, a research fellow with Southern Baptists' Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville, said culturally conservative bishops generally come from the global south and east while liberal bishops tend to come from the north and west.

The Synod on the Family, convened by Pope Francis Oct. 5-19, considered "the pastoral challenges of the family in the context of evangelization."

The synod issued an interim report Oct. 13 declaring that homosexuals "have gifts and qualities to offer the Christian community." The interim report also spoke of offering homosexuals a "welcoming home" in the church and the "precious support" that same-sex partners provide to each other.

Following a flurry of media attention, including praise from gay rights activists and criticism from conservatives, the synod concluded its two-week meeting by issuing a final report that did not speak of the "gifts" of homosexuals or the "precious support" of gay couples.

A draft of the bishops' final report included a statement

that "men and women with homosexual tendencies should be welcomed with respect and delicacy." Though that language was supported by 118 of the 180 bishops voting, it did not receive the two-thirds majority required to become a formal proposal of the synod.

Draft language about opening communion to divorced Catholics who remarry outside the church also received majority support but not the requisite supermajority to become a formal synod proposal, Religion News Service reported.

Francis ordered that the entire proposed final report be published along with a tally of the vote on each paragraph, including sections that bishops rejected.

A full English translation of the final report was not available at press time. The synod was closed to media.

No proposal of the synod becomes official Catholic doctrine. All the proposals will become a foundation for discussion at the October 2015 Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, which will make proposals to Pope Francis, who alone decides official Catholic doctrine.

Present Catholic doctrine, articulated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, states, "Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that 'homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.' They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved."

Riley said he expects next year's synod "to retain traditional teaching of the church on marriage and sexuality."



POPE FRANCIS